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# THE QUARTERLY

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## ROUTE OF CABEZA DE VACA.

BETHEL COOPWOOD.

### *Part III B.*

To understand how exaggerated stories were circulated among the Spaniards in Mexico a few instances may suffice. Tello says: "In this year, 1538, the Priest Fray Antonio de Ciudad Rodrigo sent three religious teachers in some ships of the Marquis del Valle to a land of which there was notice that it was inhabited and very rich. They went and found the contrary, and on account of the Spaniards not wanting to stay they returned; and then the same Fray Antonio de Ciudad Rodrigo sent other religious teachers by land, who went by the coast of the South Sea, and turned toward the north in company with a captain who was going also to discover new countries, though with different objects. Having, then, traveled a long time, they came to two roads, and the captain selected the one to the right hand and in a few days journey encountered very rough and steep mountains, where he could not go forward, and he turned back, as did one of the religious teachers on account of his being very ill. The other religious teacher took the left hand, with two Indians he was carrying with him for interpreters, and finding an open and continuous road, after a few days journey he came to a country inhabited by people, who came out to receive him, believing him to be a thing

of heaven, calling him the messenger of God, touching and kissing his habit. They went on following him from day to day, some times two hundred, others three hundred, and as many as four hundred persons. Some of them left the road near midday to hunt hares, rabbits, and deer for their support and that of the religious teacher, to whom they first gave what was necessary. In this way they traveled more than two hundred leagues, until they were told that the country farther in was populated by clothed people and that they had flat-roofed houses of many stories and garrets, and that there were other nations on the banks of a great river, where there were many walled towns, and that passing the river there were other very large towns of richer people, and that there were cows and other animals different from those of Castile, from where the natives of this land brought many things necessary for their sustenance, because they went at times to labor in that country.

"Before that, on account of some confused stories, there had gone out large fleets by sea and some armies by land to discover such countries, but God was not willing that it should be done except by a San Franciscan friar, ragged and patched, before anyone else, who having endured the greatest labors, hunger, and misfortunes of so long a road, returned to Mexico and gave an account thereof to his prelate, who was the Father Fray de Niza, previously commissary-general of the Indies, a learned man and very religious, who was then provincial of the province of the Holy Evangelist; and he also gave account to the viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza."<sup>1</sup>

Here we have a part of the origin of the excitement about the Seven Cities and lands of great wealth; and it is not impossible that some wandering Indians may have crossed the country from the buffalo range to Sonora and spread the stories of houses, cattle, and other wealth, which accounts were seized upon and exaggerated and finally attributed to the survivors of the Narvaez expedition. But Mendoza had a basis on which to erect the fabric of fiction with which to interest Charles V in an expedition to the north.

But Tello goes on to say: "The holy father Fray Marcos de Niza, to assure himself of what that religious teacher had related, determined to go and see it, and undertook the journey on foot *bare-*

<sup>1</sup>Tello, Cap. XCII.

*footed, being already very old, with zeal for the salvation of souls, that although the religious teachers disturbed it, for that he did not abandon the journey, as Herrera says, decade VI., lib. 1, cap. i, p. 201, carrying with him Fray Juan Olmedo, who was of the province of Jalisco; and though Torquemada says he took him for a guide, it was not for this alone, but not to burden the holy province of Jalisco, whose son Fray Juan Olmedo was, and that he would take him, as his sons had labored for the glory and honor of having sent laborers to the vineyard of the Lord, of so many and such barbarous nations. See Juan de la Cruz, lib. 6, cap. II, and Cabrera, lib. 13, cap. II, p. 1262.*

*"He arrived at the town of San Miguel, which they call Culiacan, and received notice that a short time before there had arrived at the port of Mazatlan four men, one called Andrés Dorantes, another Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, another Juan del Castillo, another Esteban a negro, and Maldonado, who, as Cabrera says, escaped from the fleet which Pánfilo de Narvaez took to Florida. The Indians killed him and all his soldiers, without any more than these escaping, who in the utmost confusion and disorder arrived at those ports, discovering large provinces and nations; and having lost the vessel, they went inland towards Jalisco where they met Captain Diego de Alcaraz and the captain Melchor Diaz, who was afterwards alcalde mayor of Culican."*<sup>2</sup> (He was made captain under Coronado in 1540.)

Here is a glimpse of the accounts about the arrival of Cabeza de Vaca, tending to show he came out in Jalisco, and that it was at a later date that Melchor Diaz became *alcalde mayor* of Culiacan; and it is cited from Cabrera. Now, if he was made such after Fray Marcos de Niza arrived at Culiacan, which was in 1538, by both this account and that of Francisco Gomara, then it was to succeed the nobleman Tapia. This is not only consonant with the records, but with all of Cabeza de Vaca's relation of the meeting with Alcaraz.

Tello goes on and says: "From there (Culiacan) the reverend Fray Marcos de Niza made a report of his journey to the viceroy, and gave a very extensive account of all the ports of the South Sea, of those provinces and nations; and the viceroy, having received the account of said father, sent him orders to take possession of all those

<sup>2</sup>Tello, Cap. XCII.

provinces, which from the first were administered by the religious teachers of Nuestro P. S. Francisco of the holy Province of Jalisco. The Fray Marcos de Niza pursued his journey, starting from Culiacan, taking with him Fray Juan Olmedo with some Indians and Esteban the negro, and he went following the same route which Fray Juan had followed before. He arrived at Petatlan, and running the coast he discovered many provinces, passing more than three hundred leagues further on than where the Spaniards had gone. He obtained information of the seven cities of Quivira and of the three provinces of Marata, Acuz, and Tontecac, which are many leagues further on than the Síbolos, according to Gomara, Part I, folio 281, and Cornelio Wiclef in chapter of Nueva Granada, page 161.

"This holy baron having examined these provinces, he determined to send Esteban and some Indians to the province of the Síbolos, as in fact he did. They were put to death by those barbarians, only two escaping to bring the news to the holy father, who regretted their loss as was reasonable, and the Indians seeing the mortality the Síbolos had made among their companions, and fearing that the father might order them to go from that to another province, they determined to take his life, as Herrera says, by which they obliged him to withdraw with much pain, not from fear of death, but because those souls, *as many as had been baptized*, might be lost and apostatize from the faith.

"He withdrew after having taken possession of all those provinces, as stated by Herrera, Bernal Diaz del Castillo, cap. 201, fol. 235; Villagran, canto III, cap. II, fol. XI; Cabrera, lib. 13, cap. II, page 1162; Juan de la Cruz, lib. 6, cap. XIV.

"Having seen the provinces of Marata, Acuz, and Tontecac, which he called San Francisco, continuing the name given to them by Fray Juan the first time he went into the land, as is affirmed by Juan de la Cruz and Wiclef, he returned to New Spain, considering that if he should die there the knowledge of all those lands might be lost, and the baptized Indians inhabiting them, who were many, might apostatize.

"He arrived at Mexico and gave an account to the viceroy, D. Antonio de Mendoza, of what he had seen, and how what the other religious teacher had said was certain and true."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Tello, Cap. XCH.

Not only the great majority of the Spanish people, but Charles V himself held in highest esteem whatever such holy men might report; and no one was better informed of this fact than Mendoza, who, with this confirmation by Fray Marcos de Niza, deemed the story of such wonderful countries an unquestionable basis for asking permission and aid from the king to make the expedition to and conquest of Marata, Acuz, and Tontecac, and the Seven Cities of Síbola and Quivira, especially when he had not failed to shape the latter part of Cabeza de Vaca's relation in anticipation of the success of the labors of such holy fathers in that direction. And it is not strange that Cortés should pronounce the whole story of Fray Niza a fabrication based upon information obtained from some of his Indians.

Francisco Lopez de Gomara says: "Fernando Cortés and Don Antonio de Mendoza desired to make entrance into and conquest of that land of Síbola, each one by himself and for himself; Don Antonio as viceroy of New Spain, and Cortés as captain general and discoverer of the South Sea. They attempted to join in order to do it by concert of action; but having no confidence in each other, they quarreled, and Cortés came to Spain, and Don Antonio sent out Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, a native of Salamanca, with a good army of Spaniards and Indians and four hundred horses."<sup>4</sup>

This shows that Mendoza was striving to get control of and make the expedition to Síbola; and had Cabeza de Vaca stated in his relation to the king that he came to Jalisco and there first met Alcaraz, Diaz, and Chirinos, that would not have aided the scheme for an expedition to the north from Culiacan. But being sent by Mendoza to inform the king of the country discovered, he must have been required to state that he came out at Culiacan. For, as Zamacois says, of the arrival of Cabeza de Vaca and his companions at Mexico: "The viceroy Mendoza treated them with much amiability; and on listening to the seductive relation they made to him of the rich country of Quivira, he proposed to send in the future an expedition to add that flourishing realm to the crown of Castile. In order to put in operation his enterprise, he told them they should form a plan of the territories that they had traversed in their long peregrination. Cabeza de Vaca and his companions obeyed the desire of the viceroy,

<sup>4</sup>*Historia de las Indias*, Part I. *Tit. Síbola*.

by making the map in the most exact manner possible for them. A few days after that Cabeza de Vaca and Castillo embarked at Vera Cruz for Spain, commissioned by the viceroy to inform the monarch of the land discovered.”<sup>5</sup>

This shows they were commissioned by Mendoza to make the relation to the king, and that he desired to make the expedition.

Again, Zamacois says: “While the realm of New Spain flourished visibly under the well managed government of the illustrious viceroy Don Antonio Mendoza, an occurrence came to cut the good friendship and excellent harmony which had reigned until then between him and Hernan Cortés. From the time notice of the existence of the rich realm of Quivira and of its seven brilliant cities, in which gold, silver, and pearls abound, was received, the viceroy proposed to send an expedition to discover and take possession of the country. On seeing the preparations being made to undertake the discovery, the Marquis del Valle declared that the enterprise belonged to him, as well on account of its being something analogous to his employment of captain general, as by the privilege the king had conceded to him for the discoveries on the South Sea. But the viceroy, who desired to participate in the glory promised by the aggregation of those famous territories to the crown of Castile, proposed to commit the expedition to Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, governor of New Galicia, and notified the Marquis del Valle that he should desist from taking any step in respect to the projected discovery.”<sup>6</sup>

The extreme to which Mendoza carried his bitter opposition to any part being taken by Cortés in the enterprise, cannot be better expressed than it is in the quotation following:

“In the statement of his grievances, Cortés declares that Mendoza not only threw every possible obstacle in his way, seizing six or seven vessels which failed to get away with Ulloa, but that even after Ulloa had gone, the viceroy sent a strong force up the coast to prevent the ships from entering any of the ports. When stress of weather forced one of the ships to put into Guatulco, the pilot and sailors were imprisoned and the viceroy persistently refused to return the ship to its owner. About the same time, a messenger who had been sent to

<sup>5</sup>Zamacois, Vol. IV, pp. 605-606.

<sup>6</sup>Zamacois, Vol. IV, pp. 652-653.

Cortés from Santiago in Colima was seized and tortured, in the hope of procuring from him information about the plans of Cortés.”<sup>7</sup>

Mendoza was eager for the glory of adding the territories to be conquered to the crown; and he was active in combining reports to influence his royal majesty not only to permit him to set on foot the expedition, but to expend large sums of his own wealth to insure its success. “Money was advanced from the royal chest to any who had debts to pay before they could depart, and provisions were made for the support of those who were about to be left behind by fathers, brothers, or husbands. Arms and military supplies had been among the things greatly needed in New Spain when Mendoza reported its condition in his first letters to the home government. In 1537 he repeated his request for these supplies with increased insistence.” The subject is not again mentioned in his letters, and we may fairly suppose that he had received the weapons and munitions of war, fresh from the royal arsenals of Spain, with which he equipped the expedition on whose success he had staked so much.<sup>8</sup>

This increased insistence being in 1537, it was before Fray Niza was sent out, and possibly before Cabeza de Vaca left New Spain, as he did not get off until April, 1537;<sup>9</sup> and he may have borne the communication to the king, delivering it after arriving in the port of Lisbon on the 9th day of August, 1537. Indeed, it may have been included in the commission given them by the viceroy a few days before they embarked at Vera Cruz.

This shows only a detached portion of a plan to influence his royal majesty to approve and aid in putting on foot the proposed expedition. It is a clearly defined foot print of the infatuated viceroy’s scheme, and cannot be attributed to any other cause, after the monster elephant and its trail through the mountains has been seen and made familiar to the readers of history.

Though Coronado’s confirmation was not signed till April 18, 1539, it seems he was already in New Galicia arranging the administration and other affairs of his government, and “entertained Fray Marcos when the latter passed through his province in the spring of

<sup>7</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-93, Part I, p. 369, and note 2 thereon.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>9</sup>*Naufragios*, Cap. XXXVII.



1539,<sup>10</sup> and accompanied the friar as far as Culiacan, the northernmost of the Spanish settlements. Here he provided the friar with Indians, provisions, and other things necessary for the journey to the Seven Cities."<sup>11</sup>

The fact of Coronado's being there and entertaining Fray Marcos about the date of his nomination being confirmed by the king, which could not have reached him till a month or two later, is significant of some preconceived plan of operation; and if, as said by Gomara, Fray Marcos passed by Culiacan in 1538, such indication is even stronger. But if, as stated by Tello, Fray Marcos de Niza undertook the journey on foot and barefooted,<sup>12</sup> the prospective leader of the expedition to be gotten up on the holy father's report must have made a queer appearance in company with such a pedestrian.

Again, it is said that "about midsummer of 1539, Friar Marcos came back from Cibola. Coronado met him as he passed through New Galicia, and together they returned to Mexico to tell the viceroy what the friar had seen and heard. Coronado remained at the capital during the autumn and early winter, taking an active part in all the preparations for the expedition which he was to command. After the final review in Compostela, he was placed in command of the army, with the title of captain-general."<sup>13</sup>

From this it appears that Coronado figured with Fray Marcos from the beginning, accompanying him to Culiacan as he went out, and joining him on the return and accompanying him to Mexico, where the scheme of Mendoza for the expedition was perfected. And it is not strange that Fray Marcos should report the Seven Cities, when that theory had been handed round from a much earlier period. Indeed, Guzman had with him an Indian who told of his father having gone "into the back country with fine feathers to trade for ornaments, and that when he came back he brought a large amount of gold and

<sup>10</sup>Gomara says Fray Marcos de Niza and another Franciscan friar went in by Culiacan in the year 1538. *Historia de las Indias*, Part I. *Tit. Sibola*.

<sup>11</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-93, Part I, p. 381.

<sup>12</sup>Tello, Cap. XCII.

<sup>13</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-93, Part I, pp. 381-382.

silver, of which there is a good deal in that country. He went with him once or twice, and saw some very large villages, which he compared to Mexico and its environs. He had seen seven very large towns which had streets of silver workers."<sup>14</sup> And the name of the Seven Cities had already been given to the country Guzman was aiming to discover when he first started out from Mexico.

Now, whatever may have been the understanding between Mendoza and Fray Marcos, Coronado must have been a co-worker in the scheme, and when the report of the friar, supervised by Mendoza and Coronado, was completed at Mexico, and given out to the public, everything was ripe to organize the expedition. The stories on the streets of the capital connected, blended, and confused the accounts of Cabeza de Vaca and Fray Marcos, and made the general impression that both had seen the Seven Cities, and greatly facilitated the plan of the viceroy and of Coronado. But it is plain to every student of the relation of Cabeza de Vaca that he did not claim to have seen or even heard of the celebrated Seven Cities of Sibola. Indeed, all that he says about the towns and houses is set forth in Part II of this paper, and it is as follows:

"Y á mí me dieron cinco esmeraldos hechas puntas de flechas, y con estas flechas hacen ellos sus areitos y bales; y pareciendome á mí que eran muy buenas, les pregunté que dónde las habian habido, y dijeron que las traian de unas sierras muy altas que están hácia el norte, y las compraban á trueco de penachos y plumas de papagayos, y decian que habia allí pueblos, de mucha gente y casas muy grandes."<sup>15</sup> So as to the towns, all he says is that they said "there were towns there of many people and very large houses." This was all they could find in his relation to corroborate the tales repeated on the streets, or the account of the Seven Cities of Sibola described by Fray Marcos. And it seems that Cabeza de Vaca was not educated in the already existing lore as to the Seven Cities; for his flight of more than a thousand leagues of populated country where they had much subsistence, and always planted beans and maize three times a year, was "close to the coast, by the way of those towns

<sup>14</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-93, Part I, pp. 472-473.

<sup>15</sup>*Naufraios*, Cap. XXXI.

where we traveled," which did not chime with the story of the Seven Cities, even if it had not been a patent exaggeration.

The dissatisfaction in Guzman's camp as to the route to be pursued and the change in favor of going down the river toward the territory of Francisco Cortés, and the subsequent determination to send Pedro Almendez Chirinos toward the north, after concluding the war with the Indians of the river of Cuitzeo, may be better understood by reference to Castañeda's account of the Indian Tejo, who, it seems, was at the foundation of the idea of the Seven Cities. This was general among the people at Mexico as early as 1530, while Cabeza de Vaca was yet in the vicinity of Mal-Hado, waiting to get Oviedo to come away with him. The following quotation is from Castañeda's narrative, translated by George Parker Winship:

"FIRST PART.

*"Chapter 1, which treats of the way we first came to know about the Seven Cities, and of how Nuño de Guzman made an expedition to discover them.*

"In the year 1530<sup>16</sup> Nuño de Guzman, who was President of New Spain, had in his possession an Indian, a native of the valley or valleys of Oxitipar, who was called Tejo by the Spaniards. This Indian said he was the son of a trader who was dead, but that when he was a little boy his father had gone into the back country with fine feathers to trade for ornaments, and that when he came back he brought a large amount of gold and silver, of which there is a good deal in that country. He went with him once or twice, and saw some very large villages, which he compared to Mexico and its environs. He had seen seven very large towns which had streets of silver workers. It took forty days to go there from his country, through a wilderness in which nothing grew, except some very small plants about a span high. The way they went was up through the country between the two seas, following the northern direction. Acting on this information, Nuño de Guzman got together nearly 400 Spaniards and 20,000 friendly Indians of New Spain, and, as he happened to be in Mexico, he crossed Tarasca, which is in the province of Michoacan, so as to get into the region which the Indian

<sup>16</sup>Tello gives the date of Guzman's leaving the City of Mexico as the beginning of November, 1529. Cap. XXVI.

said was to be crossed toward the North sea, in this way getting to the country which they were looking for which was already named 'The Seven Cities.'"<sup>17</sup>

This shows that the name was already in Mexico long before Cabeza de Vaca arrived there; and it is fair to presume that its being reported that he had seen or even heard of the Seven Cities was merely to add force to the general design.

Did the expression towards the North Sea, used by Castañeda, mean towards the Gulf of Mexico, which the Spaniards of New Spain call *la Mar del Norte*, or did it mean towards the north pole? The former seems to be the meaning of the words used.

Having gone to the crossing of the river coming from Toluca, Guzman intended to march northward from there; but the murmuring in his camp about the route caused him to order the two Indians he took from Mexico to be brought before him, but only one was found. When they brought him before Nuño de Guzman, he asked him for his companion, and he did not know what to say, nor what had become of the other. When asked whether he did not know there was nothing on the route they had proposed to take with the army, he simply replied that his companion knew better than he did. Then it was that Guzman called to him certain caciques of Jacona, who gave him information of the river of Cuitzeo and its settlements, as well as of the valley of Cuina. Hearing such good news and believing the same, he called his captains, and when together, he told them that they and all the army were lost, and that it was his fault in being guided by two Indians, and on that account he had called them together, and it was then determined to take the route to the west down the river toward the territory of Francisco Cortés.<sup>18</sup>

It does not appear affirmatively that the missing Indian guide was Tejo, but it may fairly be presumed to have been he. He is stated to have been a native of Valle or Valles de Oxitipar, the locality of which is not stated; but if it was the Valles, first known as Tanzocob, Guzman may have obtained him at Pánuco, where he was governor before going to Mexico. And Tejo once getting out there

<sup>17</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Part I*, pp. 472-473, and original Spanish, pp. 416-417.

<sup>18</sup>Tello, Cap. XXVIII.

on the river and, perhaps, recognizing the country may have fled to his native country or home.

After the fighting with the Indians of Cuitzeo river, Guzman, still having an idea of what his lost guide had said about the route to the Seven Cities, sent Pedro Almendez Chirinos toward the north in order to ascertain whether the course he first intended to take was correct. After going as far north as Chichimequillas, now Los Lagos, and into the Sierra Gorda, and not finding any way out toward the North sea or Gulf, Chirinos came out to the west again, and, taking the advice of the Zacatecan cacique, continued his march northward to the present site of Zacatecas, and there turned back across the country to reunite with Guzman's column. But had he taken the route from where he came back out of Sierra Gorda to the northeast, now pursued to where San Luis Potosí is, and thence out by Catorce to where Ventura now is, and there turned toward the Gulf, he might have found many Indian settlements and very high mountains, notably Cerro Potosí and Cerro Pablillo, and might have found the Seven Cities referred to by Tejo in the region now embracing Raices, Iturbide, Galeana, Hualahuises, Linares, Raiones, and Montemorelos. But pursuing the northerly direction, nowhere would he have found the locality now claimed for the Seven Cities between him and the Gulf, or, as it was then called, *la Mar del Norte*. So Tejo may have meant the region round Cerro Potosí; and when a small boy he may have gone up there with his father from Tanzocob or Tancanhuitz; the distance seeming to him to be great, on account of his youth. If he went from Tanzocob up by Valle de Maiz, and up the plain by Mier y Noregas to Galeana, he would have found scarcity of vegetation, except short grass (*yerba*).

Whatever may have been Tejo's native place, he may have observed his master's greed for gold and silver when he was robbing the sepulchres of the caciques round Pánuco of their contents, and added the story of the abundance of precious metals to please Guzman's fancy, until he could find an opportunity to abscond and make his way to his tribal kindred. But however this may be, he antedated Cabeza de Vaca in having told of the Seven Cities, and may have been the author of the story which excited Guzman and the people of Mexico to go in search of Síbola.

There is in the fact of this Indian being called a Tejo, or Texo

as the early Spaniards wrote it, enough to afford a nucleus for the history of the origin of the name Texas, by following the idea of his being a Texo to its connection with the Tejo tribe of the Tejo-Coahuilteca family which extended from near Red river to where Monclova is now in Coahuila, and whose family tongue has been referred to above. But this is not sufficiently connected with the subject of this paper to justify its examination here.

Finally, as the Seven Cities of Sibola are placed not far east of the Colorado of the West, and far north of Rio Gila, they do not correspond with the direction given by Tejo, which required a northern route from the crossing of the river coming from Toluca to a point even with these cities and thence toward the Gulf of Mexico, or *la Mar del Norte*, to reach them, thereby placing them east of such northern course, about which the dissatisfaction occurred in Guzman's camp as to pursuing such route.

But Tejo will here be left to be followed by some one writing upon the Tejo tribe, or the Tejas, whose indelible foot prints are eternized by their name in the plural, Texas, or Tejas, being fixed upon the territory over which they once roamed.

The existence of a family tongue from Texas to Michoacan, wherever the Nahoas went, is another reason to believe that Cabeza de Vaca traveled within its limits from the Bravo to where he met Alcaraz. And this great natural and even historical fact and Cabeza de Vaca's reference thereto constitute a proof of such being the limits through which he passed, which rises above his inventive genius, and defies the attempts of the most skillful schemers to change it.

Declining to enter the nebula of prehistoric times, it is rational to hold, with Señor Chavero, that there were three great groups occupying the country, to wit: Mayaquiché at the south, the Otomies at the centre, and the Nahoas at the north, and this especially between the great central table lands and the Mexican Gulf. The indelible recollections preserved as to the three will never allow doubts as to their existence; and in attempting to go back of them, the historian enters the field of hypothesis, where it is easy to make such blunders as might wound common sense; while the intelligent reader cares not whether these three great families sprang from Asiatic races, or were autochthons, or, under the Darwinian theory,

by natural selection made where history first finds them, the astonishing bound from the monkey to the man. That they existed there will suffice for this part of the examination of Cabeza de Vaca's route, and such fact is patent from the parts of such families being in the country through which he passed even till the present day, with a family tongue as he notes.

The continuous emigrations of the Nahoas toward the south and of the Mayas toward the north, each as far as the central part occupied by the Otomies, caused the confusion of races and families, mixing the language and mutually changing religions and forms of worship, though always preserving enough of the original tongue of each people to serve as a common medium through which the different detached tribes could communicate their thoughts to each other. And it has been already shown that many of the tribes from the Bravo to Sierra Gorda were of the Nahoas family, whose emigrations toward the south, or centre of the country, brought them in contact there with the Otomi family and the Tarasco branch of it that found the powerful kingdom of Michoacan, of which the unfortunate king who was tortured and put to death by Guzman was the actual native ruler, and whose ancient realm embraced Jacona and all of Pedro Almendez Chirinos's *encomienda*.

In his volume on the State of Mexico, Velasco says, the inhabitants of the district of Jilotepec speak Spanish, the Mexican, and the Otomitl, and says the same of seven other districts of the State. He says the people of the district of Chalco de Diaz Covarrubias speak Spanish, Mexican, Nahuatl, and Otomitl; those of the district of Ixtlahuaca de Raion speak Spanish, Otomitl, and Mazahuatl; and the same is said of the district of Valle de Bravo. He says the people of the district of Toluca de Laredo speak Spanish, Mexican, Nahuatl, and Otomitl; and those of the district of Sultepec de Alquiseras speak Spanish, Mexican, and Nahuatl.<sup>19</sup> He also says the State has a population of 798,480; 51,199 whites, 287,056 mixed, and 460,225 Indians.<sup>20</sup> So the Nahuatl or Nahoas tongue is spoken today in three of the largest districts of the State of Mexico, which is bounded on the west by Michoacan, the home of the Tarascos, and

<sup>19</sup>See pages 55-150.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

the Otomi tongue is spoken in twelve of the districts of the same State. Here the Nahoas immigrants met and mingled with the Otomi family, and have continued to live among them till the present day. They doubtless went into Michoacan and Jalisco, among the Tarascos and Chichimecas, both of which tribes still have living representatives in their descendants located in these two States. Indeed, if there should be no further evidence of these families meeting, what is here pointed out would suffice to show the Nahoas and Otomies living together; but another State bears the same living evidence.

In his volume, *State of Guanajuato*, Velasco says of the inhabitants, that in the district of Hidalgo there are Otomies and Chichimecas who speak the languages of their names (p. 73); in that of San Diego there are Otomies and Chichimecas who speak the Spanish and their Indian languages (p. 77); in that of San Felipe are Otomies and Chichimecas who speak the languages of their names (81); in the municipality of Acámbaro there are Chichimecas and Tarascos who speak the languages of their names (p. 98); the same is true in the municipality of Tarandacuao (p. 101); in the *partida* of Comonfort there are some Otomies (p. 110); in the district of Cortazar there are a great number of Otomies, above all in the pueblo del Guaje (p. 115); in the municipality of Jerécuaro there are some Tarascos (p. 119); in the municipality of Coroneo there are Tarascos (p. 121); in the district of Salvatierra there are Tarascos (p. 130); in the district of Tarimoro there are Tarascos (p. 137); in the municipality of Yuriria there are Tarascos who speak the language of their name (pp. 141-142); in the municipality of Santiago Maravatio there are a great number of Tarascos (p. 144); in the municipality of Uruapan there are Tarascos (p. 146); and the city of Guanajuato "was founded by Chichimecas who gave it the name of Quanaxuato, a Tarascan name which means mountain of frogs, and was given to it on account of the Indians having found there a stone in the shape of a frog, which afterwards became the idol of the Chichimecas. It is also believed it was due to the abundance of frogs in the settlement" (p. 156).

Here are fourteen districts and municipalities of the State of Guanajuato in which the Otomies, Chichimecas, and Tarascos still live, and the picturesque capital still bears the Tarascan name given to it before the Spanish came to the country.



Guanajuato joins San Luis Potosí from near south of Salsipuedes, along the Sierra Gorda parallel with the Bagres river, or Rio de Santa Maria, as commonly called along there, up to Jaral and on to the line of Jalisco, north of Vaquerio. This division line passes a short distance south of the city of Santa Maria, and the tribes of the Sierra Gorda there were much the same as those along that part of the Bagres. From the northwest corner of Guanajuato the dividing line between it and Jalisco passes between Los Lagos and Cerro Gigante, and most of the route of Cabeza de Vaca as drawn on the sketch from Santa Maria del Rio to this mountain is through territory of Guanajuato, passing through the district of San Felipe and into that of Leon. In both the municipalities of the former there were and still are Otomies and Chichimecas who still speak the languages of their name; and these were in a land of maize. Even now the municipality of San Felipe produces about 400,000 hectolitres of maize per year and 10,000 of beans; and that of Ocampo about 100,000 hectolitres of corn and 20,000 of beans. It was from this corn region of the Otomies and Chichimecas that the corn was carried up on the point of Cerro Gigante; and these people spoke Otomi and Nahoas, and understood Cabeza de Vaca.

East and southeast of the district of San Felipe is the district of San Diego de la Union, in which there are still Otomies and Chichimecas. These bordered on the south side of Rio Bagres. East of it is the municipality of San Luis de la Paz which joins the State of San Luis Potosí, and in it there are a great number of Otomies. It borders the line of the route designated for that of Cabeza de Vaca on the south side of the Rio Bagres. The district of Victoria joins San Luis Potosí on the north and the State of Querétaro on the east, and the population of each of its municipalities is largely Otomies. This finishes the south side of the line of San Luis Potosí to almost in front of Salsipuedes and to the northeast corner of Guanajuato and northwesterly corner of the State of Querétaro.

Of the language of the State of Guanajuato, Velasco says: "Nearly all the inhabitants speak Castilian. Among the Indians Otomi, Tarasco, *Pame*, Chichimeca, and Jarepecha (a Tarasco dialect) are spoken" (p. 253). And it has already been shown that the Nahoas were mixed with the Otomies as far south as the State of Mexico; and the Pames, a tribe of the Nahoas family, extended from the State of Querétaro north to Rio Conchas.

The State of Querétaro borders on that of San Luis Potosí, its district of Jalpam being the most northerly and embracing the part so adjoining San Luis Potosí. The major part of its inhabitants are Otomies and speak Otomi, and there are some Huastecos. It is quite a corn region, producing nearly 300,000 hectolitres of corn and 60,000 of beans yearly. Above the northwestern part of it is the region in which Cabeza de Vaca found the town with houses, beans, pumpkins, and maize already gathered. In the State of Querétaro there are about 65,000 Otomies, who still speak that tongue.

Of the languages spoken in the State of Querétaro, Velasco says: "The majority of the inhabitants speak Castilian. Only among the Indians the Otomi and the *Pame* are used.

"The Otomi is a very sweet language, the alphabet of which is composed of thirty-four letters" (p. 108).

It may not be amiss to mention here how the Tarascos derived their name. Omitting the eloquence of the historian in coming to the point, Zamacois tells the story as follows:

"The nobles being contented to have among them the white men who had destroyed the power of the Aztec empire, they gave their daughters to them, which was the proof of fraternity with which those nations manifested their appreciation to those whom they considered as already of the family. As the principal men of the realm in the act of giving their daughters to the Spaniards pronounced the word *tarascue*, which in their language signifies son-in-law, the Castilians gave the Indians of Michoacan the name of *Tarascos*, by which they were known thereafter."<sup>21</sup>

Under such circumstances Cristóbal de Olid was readily enabled to found the town he had gone there to establish.

In order to appreciate the extent and importance of the Otomi race and tongue, it must be remembered that the Otomies were among the most powerful allies of Cortés. As soon as they learned that the Tlaxcalans had united with Cortés, they joined in the common war being made against the Aztec empire, and proved efficient and faithful allies to the Spanish chief. After the reduction of the capital of the Aztec emperors, and the return of the Otomi

<sup>21</sup>*Historia de Mexico*, Tom. IV, pp. 73-74.

caciques to their own territory, the two principal ones, after having received baptism, fixed their residence in Jilotepec, the chief city of the province of the Otomies. They were Nicolás de San Luis, a descendant of the emperor of Tula and Jilotepec, and Fernando de Tapia, of the first Otomi nobility; and they conceived the idea of conquering the Chichimecas of San Juan del Rio and Querétaro. They easily collected men and the other necessary elements to undertake the conquest, as all the caciques of the vast province of Jilotepec and Tula were their kinsmen, and most of them had embraced Christianity. Twenty caciques readily offered to follow them; and their squadrons being formed, they went to the conquest of the Chichimecas, who were scattered over the territory now embracing Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, and others, and which territory was then called the "Great Chichimeca."

On St. John the Baptist's day, 1531, they entered and took possession of the place where San Juan del Rio is now. They marched thence towards the present site of Querétaro, where a most singular battle was fought, which terminated in favor of the Otomies on the twenty-fifth of July, 1531. They captured many other places and spread the settlements of Otomies from Jilotepec and Tula northward into Querétaro, Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, and parts of Hidalgo.<sup>22</sup>

These were the people who had been met by and had mingled with the Nahoas of the north, and had a common tongue with them, or, at least, understood the Nahuatl; and they are today a living evidence of the former existence of the Otomi family; and the Nahoas living in the State of Mexico and especially in the districts of Toluca, Sultepec, and Chalco de Diaz Covarrubias, are not only proofs of the former existence of their family, but also of their mingling with the Otomies.

For the purposes of this paper, it is not deemed necessary to examine critically all the signs indicating the land from which the Nahoas came; nor is it proper to seize upon all that has been rashly affirmed by those little versed in the traditions or tongues of the family. The fact that tribes of this family were found in parts of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosí, and Hi-

<sup>22</sup>An interesting account of this war is given by Zamacois, Vol. IV, pp. 548-554.

dalgo when the Spaniards came to the country, will suffice to show that if Cabeza de Vaca pursued the route indicated upon the sketch accompanying Part II of this paper he went through a country where the Nahuatl was spoken by the tribes. But, notwithstanding the fact of its being historically known that such tribes have existed along there ever since he went through the country *en route* to a land of Christians, it may not be out of place to notice what is said of this family by Señor Isidro R. Gondra in what he wrote at request of Señor Ignacio Cumplido, editor of the Spanish edition of Prescott's History of the Conquest. He says:

"The ancient and first inhabitants of New Spain, the Chichimecas, were savages and barbarians, going completely nude, and leading a wandering life, subsisting alone upon game without cultivating the soil. The Nahuatlacas (people who express themselves with clearness), people much more civilized, arrived from the North, where New Mexico has since been discovered, in which country there were two provinces, the one called Aztlan and the other Tecolcoacan. The industrious and civilized inhabitants were divided into seven nations, each of which had its separate territory. It is said they came out of seven caverns about the year 820 of the Christian era, and that their journey to Mexico lasted eighty years, they not having found the signs of the lands which their idols had foretold to them. In their transit, they cultivated the soil and constructed cabins in many places, leaving in them many people, especially old persons and invalids."<sup>23</sup>

While this may contain some truth, it is mixed with Chichimeca and Aztec traditions not applicable to the Nahuatlacas, or Nohoa family. It combines parts of the traditions of the two peregrinations and adds that in reference to New Mexico from what the early writers told about the Coronado expedition. However, if the Indians met by this expedition among the buffalo were Comanches, they belonged to the Chichimeca family, and were not Nahuatlacas; but on the other hand, if they were descendants of the Nahoas family, then they were distinct from both the Chichimecas and the Aztecs, according to Gondara, and may have sprung from those left at some one of the cabins on the route of the Nahoas family, whose

<sup>23</sup>*Tradition of the Nahuatlacas*, p. 22.

Aztlan may have been much farther north. Therefore, this degression may be ended with the suggestion that a comparison of the tongues of the tribes found in high latitudes west of the Mississippi with the Nahuatl, critically made by competent scholars, might develop many signs of kinship and cast some light upon the question of the true locality of Aztlan and Tecoloacan.

While it is believed that there is not sufficient similarity between the Mobilian and Nahuatl to prove that either sprang from the other, it seems that the Otomitl and the Creek or Muscogee are similar in some particulars.

It has already appeared that the greater portion of the early tribes found in Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon were of the Nahoia family, and that they extended as far south as the Sierra Gorda. Those Cabeza de Vaca found at the end of the third day's journey after crossing the first large river, and who were lighter colored than any he had seen before, were of the Nahoia family and so were those at the foot of the mountain where he spent two nights. If he followed the route indicated in the second part of this paper, he passed through the Hualahuises, who were also of the same family. Those of Tanzocob were also of such family, and from there up the Bagres to Santa Maria del Rio he must have met Nahoias and Otomies and Tarascos who had also mixed with and learned the Nahuatl. The Liguaces on the right margin of the Bravo being of the Nahoia family, then if the Iguaces between the Bravo and the Gulf were the same tribe, with their name written by Cabeza de Vaca without the *L* they were also of the Nahoia family; and the principal Indian tongue Cabeza de Vaca had learned must have been Nahuatl, by means of which he was able to converse with all the tribes of Nahuatlacas he met on his route.

So if Cabeza de Vaca and his companions could understand the tribes of the Nahoia family, or, in other words, if they had learned a Nahuatl dialect, they were thereby enabled to converse with tribes found along the route designated from Jamaica Crossing on the Bravo to the Cerro de Gigante, where they found the town on the point of the mountain, whose people accompanied them to where they met Alcaraz. And they not only used a dialect serving such purpose, but in speaking of the tongue with which they and the Indians understood each other, Cabeza de Vaca says: "Which, for

more than four hundred leagues of those we traveled, we found used among them, without there being another in all those countries.”<sup>24</sup>

There where they met Alcaraz, then, we find them understanding the Indians in a tongue existing all along the route they had come, which answers the conditions above shown with reasonable certainty; and this seems to show that the route designated above, at least, afforded this general tongue spoken by the people along it, and which Cabeza de Vaca and his comrades understood. If there were other routes from where they left the Avavares before they crossed the first great river to Sonora and Sinaloa, along which there existed such a state of facts, those heretofore studying and writing upon this subject seem to have overlooked them; and this dialect sign of the route here adopted is submitted with the other *indicia* pointed out above to aid in making this examination as clear to the reader as a limited knowledge of the subject and the country to which it relates has enabled it to be done, but without claiming it to be as Nahuatl as might be asked by a Thomas among the readers of the QUARTERLY.

Now it may be proper to briefly notice the expression of Castañeda and Jaramillo about Cabeza de Vaca and Dorantes. The translation by George Parker Winship will be adopted, as in the main it is very complete, and fully conforms to the rule laid down by Francisco Lopez de Gomara, who says to the translators: “Yo ruego mucho á los tales, por el amor que tienen á las historias, que guarden mucho la sentencia, mirando bien la propiedad de nuestro romance, que muchas veces ataja grandes razones con pocas palabras. Y que no quitan ni añadan ni muden letra á los nombres propios de indios, ni á los sobrenombres de españoles, si quieren hacer oficio de fieles traductores.”<sup>25</sup>

Castañeda says: “He traveled four days and reached a large ravine like those of Colima, in the bottom of which he found a large settlement of people. Cabeza de Vaca and Dorantes had passed through this place, so that they presented Don Rodrigo with a pile of tanned skins and other things, and a tent as big as a house, which he directed them to keep until the army came up. \* \* \* The

<sup>24</sup>*Naufraios*, Cap. XXXIV.

<sup>25</sup>*Historia de las Indias: A los Trasladores.*

women and some others were left crying, because they thought that the strangers were not going to take anything, but would bless them as Cabeza de Vaca and Dorantes had done when they passed through here."<sup>26</sup>

Notwithstanding these expressions, wholly unsupported by any reason for using them, or showing from whom or how Castañeda got the information, the relation of Cabeza de Vaca repels the idea of his having passed that place; and, therefore, his own words will be presented as a proper answer to the theory of his having gone that way.

He was in the prickly pear region when he ran off from his one-eyed Mariame master and went to the Avavares, with whom he wintered in that region, among thorny, close chaparrals, where the wounds he received from the thorns, in his naked condition, caused him to contemplate the suffering of his Redeemer. After being separated from the Avavares for five days and reaching them again, he says: "And that night they gave me of the prickly pears they had, and next day we passed on from there and went to where we found many prickly pears, with which all satisfied their great hunger."<sup>27</sup> After curing the dead Susol Indian, he was given two more baskets of prickly pears.<sup>28</sup> And he says he and his companions remained with those Avavar Indians eight months.<sup>29</sup> After leaving the Avavares and going to where they ate the two dogs, believing they had strength to go forward, they left those Indians and went to where they found fifty houses, and there the people gave them to eat prickly pear leaves and green prickly pears broiled.<sup>30</sup>

This not only shows they were still among the prickly pears, but that it was in the early spring, as the green fruit was large enough to be broiled for food, though still green, which is the case in the lower part of Zapata county sometimes as early as the twentieth day

<sup>26</sup>Cap. XIX. *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 505-506.

<sup>27</sup>*Naufraños*, Cap. XXI.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, Cap. XXII.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

of February. This was where they left the Indians crying for them.<sup>31</sup>

Leaving those who were crying, they went to where they were given the flour of mezquiquez, or mesquite beans,<sup>32</sup> showing they were still among the mesquite growth. And from there they crossed the first large river, as wide as that at Sevilla and breast deep, and at sunset reached the hundred houses; which shows they were in a region of prickly pears and mesquite trees till they crossed this river.<sup>33</sup> From this place they traveled two days, reaching Indian houses each night, and on the third they arrived at many houses, where the people were whiter than any they had seen in the country till then.<sup>34</sup> Here they began to see the first mountains they saw in the country, which came consecutively from toward the sea of the north, and so, from the account given them by the Indians of the place, they believed they were fifteen leagues from the sea.<sup>35</sup> With these Indians they went from here toward these mountains, and when they arrived they were given ocher and some small bags of silver. Next day all the people there desired to take them to others, their friends, who were at the point of the mountain; but, after remaining over one day, they went along the plain near the mountains, which they believed were not far from the coast,<sup>36</sup> and at sunset arrived at a place of twenty houses, where they were given prickly pears and no other thing.<sup>37</sup>

Thus it appears they reached the foot of this mountain the evening of the fourth day's journey from the crossing of the river, and the next day's travel put them at the twenty houses, where they still received prickly pears.

After going on to where the Indian physicians gave them the two gourds,<sup>38</sup> and thence along the skirt of the mountain a distance they

<sup>31</sup>*Naufragios*, Cap. XXII.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Cap. XXVIII.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, Cap. XXIX, showing they had such there.



called fifty leagues to where they received the copper hawkbell, and another day's march over a mountain whose stones were *scoriæ* of iron to the houses on the beautiful stream where they ate the *piñones*, Cabeza de Vaca says of the people: "They eat prickly pears and *piñones*."<sup>39</sup> (And here they received the first buffalo skins, where there were prickly pears and *piñones*. From this place they made the journeys to the second large river, then through rough mountains and finally to the place on a stream flowing between some mountains where the captive Indian woman's father lived, finding houses with foundations, where the people ate maize and pumpkins, and thence in one day to the town of houses with foundations, where they ate maize and pumpkins, and were given skins of buffalo. Here the people went naked. From here they went up a river toward the sunset to find the place where maize grew all over the land; and they received cow hides along the lower part of the river, but Cabeza de Vaca does not mention seeing a buffalo after leaving the Avavares, yet does say he did not eat of their meat on his journey up the river.

So they were in the prickly pear region to where they got the first buffalo skins, and had left the Avavares when the green fruit was already large enough to be broiled and eaten, though green. They went to the latter place from the twenty houses near the coast, going inland, which was from the first mountain they saw, also near the coast. There is no mountain within fifteen leagues of the gulf coast in a prickly pear region north of the Rio Grande; and Pamoranes is the first so close south of it. So they must have gone inland or westward from the southern point of this mountain; for if there is another with such signs of identity, fifty years' acquaintance with the country has failed to bring it to the writer's notice.

This march being made in the early spring, if it had been northward from the Avavares, the natural conditions would have been very different. No mountain would have been found within fifteen leagues of the coast. Cabeza de Vaca's turn to go inland was near a mountain fifteen leagues from the coast in a prickly pear region, and if there is no such place north of the mouth of the Bravo, and the first one south of there is Pamoranes, then, at least, it may be said

<sup>39</sup>*Naufraios*, Cap. XXIX.

that he was south of that river when he made this turn to go inland, and that he was still in the prickly pear region where he got the first buffalo skins, and inland from Pamoranes. And he had gone there from the Avavares after the prickly pear leaves and green fruit were large enough to be broiled and eaten. He accounts for eight days' journey and then fifty leagues more, say eight days more, and then one day over the iron mountain, say seventeen days' journey from where he crossed the first great river to where he ate the prickly pears and *piñones* and received the first buffalo skins. If these journeys had been from the Pamoranes northward, he would have recrossed the Bravo and have been in middle Texas, and it would have been about the tenth of March; and had he continued to travel in the direction of the great ravine near the Point of Rocks in Colorado on the old Santa Fe road, he would possibly have reached there in April after the time he claims to have met Alcaraz on the Pacific coast. But during this time he would not have eaten any prickly pears on such route; but on it, at that time of year, he would have found vast herds of buffalo beginning to go northward, while he does not mention seeing a buffalo after leaving the Avavares. He would have encountered snow on his way farther north in going to the Point of Rocks, if he reached that place by the first of April, though it is a thousand miles from Culiacan, where he claims to have arrived in April; and as he makes no mention of seeing snow after reaching Mal-Hado on the 6th of November, 1528, until he reached the City of Mexico, it may be fairly presumed he did not encounter it on his march after leaving the Avavares; for he does not even mention any cold weather after that, though he complains of a cold snap during the five days he was separated from them and his companions.

Without examining any other part of Coronado's route, the great ravine may be located from the account of his marches from Cicuye to it. The army "proceeding toward the plains, which are all on the other side of the mountains, after four days' journey they came to a river with a large, deep current, which flowed toward Cicuye, and they named this the Cicuye river."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup>Mr. Winship's note 1 as to this is "The Rio Pecos." See *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, Part I, p. 504.

Here it may be presumed they went out through the Galisteo pass in the Jumanes mountains, which would put them on the plains after going through these mountains. Then they may have gone to the Pecos river about where Cuesta is, near where the Fort Smith and Santa Fe wagon road used to cross this river.

It is presumed that Mr. Winship had evidence for his statement that "the bridge, however, was doubtless built across the upper waters of the Canadian,"<sup>41</sup> and it will here be presumed to have been near the mouth of the Mora, and that they went thence along the plain northeast of the Colorado fork to in front of Point of Rocks, which is the southern extremity of Raton mountains, not far from where the Santa Fe route crosses Utah creek. The head of this suits the description of the *barranca* or ravine,<sup>42</sup> as it may well be compared to the most magnificent *barrancas* of Colima. And whether the fourteen day's march was from near where Cuesta is, close to where the old Fort Smith and Santa Fe wagon road crosses Rio Pecos, or from near the mouth of the Mora, this ravine or *barranca* meets the description better than any other in that region. The distance from Cuesta to the junction of Ocate creek with the Colorado, as well as now remembered, is not much more than one hundred miles, and thence east, along the old Santa Fe route, by the Point of Rocks, to the *cañon* or *barranca* is not over forty miles; and this whole distance of one hundred and forty miles might have been made by the army in fourteen days. But if the bridge was at the mouth of the Mora, and the fourteen days counted thence to the *barranca*, then it was not more than one hundred miles. If this is the *barranca* or ravine referred to, it is about longitude 103° 30' W. and latitude 36° 30' N., which affords a basis for calculation.

The first mountain within fifteen leagues of the Gulf coast, going toward Pánuco, or Tampico, from the mouth of the Mississippi, is in latitude 25° N. and longitude 98° W., and if the south end of it is not where the twenty houses were, then it would be necessary to go south to find another so close to the Gulf coast. So going north on longitude 98° W. to latitude 36° 30' N. is 11° 30', and thence west to 103° 30' W. would be 5° 30', and these two as

<sup>41</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1892-93, Part I, p. 504.

<sup>42</sup>The following description is given by Mr. Egan, of Laredo, Texas.

base and perpendicular would give the distance from Pamoranés to the *barranca* or to the Point of Rocks, on a right line as over 880 statute miles. In going to the twenty houses from where they crossed the first large river, they were traveling five days, and must have arrived there about the first of March. If they there took a right line for Point of Rocks on the first of March and averaged ten miles every day, it would have taken eighty-eight days to reach the Point of Rocks, making them arrive there on the twenty-seventh of June, two months and twenty-seven days after the date of their meeting Christians, wherever that may have been. Again, if they had averaged twenty miles per day, it would have required forty-four days to make the journey, and they would have arrived at the *barranca* or Point of Rocks on the thirteenth of April, while it is generally admitted that they reached San Miguel on the first of April. But in their nude condition, with flocks of Indians deployed on the flanks, hunting for game, ten miles for every day, including all days of delays and stops, would be a high average. So the very nature of the country and known distance from the most northerly mountain within fifteen leagues of the Gulf coast being considered, it is not possible for them to have gone from that mountain to Point of Rocks at the south end of Raton mountains, and thence to San Miguel or to Culiacan on the Pacific by the first of April.

Another view must suggest itself to every thinking person while investigating this subject. If they had gone north from the first mountain within fifteen leagues of the Gulf coast, they would have traversed six hundred miles of buffalo range before reaching Point of Rocks, and would have been going with the buffalo on the spring return to the north, which would have rendered it impossible for them to have failed to see thousands of these wild cows. But Cabeza de Vaca does not tell of seeing a single live buffalo after leaving the Avavares to go to a land of Christians.

Again, if they reached San Miguel on the first of April, they would have had to reach the *barranca* before that time, and they could not have failed to encounter some very cold weather on the plains, which would have reduced them to that necessity, experienced by so many who have traveled on those plains, of having to use buffalo chips for fuel. But no such thing is mentioned in *Nau-*

*fragios*. Had the flocks of Indians, of whom Cabeza de Vaca tells, following and going with them, been of those wandering on the buffalo plains, they would have shown the Spaniards how to make fires and cook without wood. But Cabeza de Vaca fails to mention any such teaching, though he does tell how he got fuel out of the thorny chaparrals during the winter he was with the Avavares.

Every one living who was with the Sibley brigade in 1862, will remember the snow that fell in Albuquerque the night General Canby withdrew from in front of that place in April of that year. It covered the ground several inches deep, and men heavily clad suffered with cold; and had they been as nude as were Cabeza de Vaca and his comrades, many might have perished, especially if they had been out on the plains northeast of there without knowing the use of buffalo chips.

But Cabeza de Vaca's route from where he got the first buffalo skins was first along the valleys where jack rabbits were abundant and finally to houses with foundations, where they ate maize and pumpkins, while those at the *barranca* ate nothing but raw and badly broiled buffalo meat, of which Cabeza de Vaca and his comrades ate none after crossing the first great river.

Should it be claimed that the place where Cabeza de Vaca found the town on a stream flowing between some mountains, where the Indians had houses with foundations, or the one a day's march further on, was the *barranca*, then the fact of his eating beans and pumpkins there, when those of the *barranca* had nothing of the kind, and the further fact that those of the *barranca* ate buffalo meat and Cabeza de Vaca and his comrades did not, must be presumed to show an irreconcilable difference between the two places. And another marked difference is found in the fact that the people Cabeza de Vaca met there went perfectly nude, showing a warm climate, while those at the *barranca* were clad in skins and had large tents made of the same material, showing they were accustomed to cold weather. The fact of Cabeza de Vaca's leaving this place and going up a river which came from the sunset cannot be adjusted to the *barranca*.<sup>43</sup> But of the ravine and the hail storm there, Castañeda says: "And broke all the crockery of the army, and the gourds,

<sup>43</sup>See *Naufragios*, Cap. XXX.

which caused no little necessity, because they do not have any crockery in this region, nor do they grow gourds, nor do they plant maize, nor do they eat bread, but instead raw or badly broiled meat, and fruits.”<sup>44</sup>

On leaving the place where he called the people *los de las Vacas*, Cabeza de Vaca tells of thirty-five days’ journey to where he was waterbound, going to the sunset all the while, and had this been from the *barranca*, or the Point of Rocks, it would have taken him across by Taos and to the Red Fork of the Colorado of the West, about where the old trail from Santa Fe to Los Angeles in California used to cross it, and had he then continued west to some mountain with a town on the point of it, where he got the maize, and thence still westward, to meet Alcaraz, he would have been about on Virgin river, in the country of the Pah Utahs, near where Fremont crossed it in 1844; so that his Culiacan would have been on the Sand Desert east of Owen’s Lake.

The suggestion that the place where Cabeza de Vaca says they ate *piñones* might have been at the head of Utah creek, because there are *piñones* there on the declivities of Raton mountain, lacks the support of very important signs of identity mentioned by Cabeza de Vaca. The first is the total absence of prickly pears, there being none within hundreds of miles of Point of Rocks; and the second is, that the place where Cabeza de Vaca found the *piñones* was inland from the mountain standing within fifteen leagues of the Gulf coast, and was reached before crossing the second large river; and had they gone from Pamoranes, without recrossing the Bravo, they would have been forced to go around the head of it. The third is that Cabeza de Vaca makes no mention of any cold weather where he found the *piñones*, while if it had been at the head of Utah creek, the country would most likely have been covered with snow; and if he traveled northward from the Gulf coast, he would certainly have noticed the prairie dog towns for more than three hundred miles, and would have mentioned these animals along his march from the *barranca* instead of telling the jack rabbit story and fitting it to the country beyond Galeana.

The story of the German king’s celebrated painting of a wheat

<sup>44</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Part I, p. 442.*

field may serve as an argument here. He offered a valuable premium to whoever could point out a valid defect, and many connoisseurs, desiring to win the prize, as well as to add to their reputation, having pronounced it perfect, a farmer's son sought and gained admittance to the gallery, and readily pointed out the defect, saying: "Where those pretty birds light on the wheat in my father's field, their weight bends the stalks on which they light, but the stalks on which the painter has placed them are very straight." Though not a professional critic, he had seen wheat fields.

The suggestion that Cabeza de Vaca may have visited the *barranca* while peddling, is another idle thought, without considering any of the known collateral facts. While peddling none of the Spaniards were with him; and the only one he knew of was Oviedo, who remained on the Isle of Mal-Hado, and whom he visited every year. After meeting Dorantes, Castillo and the negro, he was given to the one-eyed Mariame as a slave, and did not peddle any more. So if he had gone to the *barranca* near Raton mountain while peddling, Dorantes could not have been with him; and the greatest distance he mentions going north after meeting his comrades was to where they ate the nuts, thirty leagues from the prickly pear region in which they finally left their masters and went to the Avavares. So it is presumed that the story of his going through the *barranca* with Dorantes is due to Castañeda's imaginative genius; as are many of the statements he makes.

The expressions of the bearded, blind man, given by Jaramillo, may be brought nearer the bounds of credibility. "Among whom there was an old blind man with a beard, who gave us to understand, by signs which he made, that he had seen four others like us many days before, whom he had seen near there and rather more toward New Spain, and we so understood him, and presumed that it was Dorantes and Cabeza de Vaca and those whom I have mentioned."<sup>45</sup>

This implies that the blind man had an idea of New Spain and its direction from where he was; and from the statements of Cabeza de Vaca, it seems that those of Mal-Hado also had a knowledge of there being such a country. The old man may have followed the

<sup>45</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Part I, pp. 588-589.*

buffalo south in winter when Cabeza de Vaca was the slave of the one-eyed Mariame and have encountered them and the Iguaces between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, or on the San Antonio river where they went to eat the nuts, and there met the four Spaniards, and learned of there being many such people farther south. Indeed, this old man may have been among those who Cabeza de Vaca says came down and lived upon the cows. All this was possible; and if the old man was a Comanche, then it is even probable, since his tribe roamed along the country between the Bravo and Nueces to the coast, and often as far south as where Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas, is now. In fact, as late as 1818 they went down there, and on their return, on the left margin of the Bravo in front of where Matamoros is now, captured Victoriano Chapa, who was recovered from them at San Antonio, by the commandant of that place, in 1829, and is still alive. But as to the old man having seen the Spaniards "*near there*," that is, near where Jaramillo speaks of, and as to his statement that "*we so understood him*, and presumed that it was Dorantes and Cabeza de Vaca and those [he] had mentioned," it is fully answered in what is said above as to their having gone through the *barranca*; and needs only the application here of what Mr. Winship says: "But in trying to trace these early dealings of Europeans with the American aborigines, we must never forget how much may be explained by the possibilities of misinterpretation on the part of the white men, who so often heard of what they wished to find, and who learned, very gradually and in the end imperfectly, to understand only a few of the native languages and dialects."<sup>46</sup> Indeed, it seems one leading desire was to make it appear that they had found traces of Cabeza de Vaca and his three comrades, as evidence of their having followed their back track and being on the right way to Quivira, which was connected with the route of these survivors of the Narvaez expedition only by gossip first circulated in Mexico.

This blind, bearded, old Indian is perpetuated in the memory of letters, whether he ever saw Cabeza de Vaca or not; and possibly Jaramillo's imagination enabled him to "so understand" the statement made by signs, while the blind Indian who made them would

<sup>46</sup>*Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Part I, p. 394.*



not recognize the story if told to him by one speaking his mother tongue. But it is not to be presumed that any one would deem such a story sufficient to affect the route of Cabeza de Vaca as above presented, or to negative a single natural object pointed out as one called for in *Naufragios*.

Now, the fact is fairly shown that the people where Cabeza de Vaca says they were given buffalo skins might have had them in 1536, and that the great preponderance of evidence drawn from natural objects pointed out along the route both aids and corroborates the probability that the proper places are indicated. And it is believed that the exaggerations of time and distance in the *Naufragios* are shown with sufficient certainty to repel the idea of their proving a route thousands of leagues longer than the one here adopted.

As to whether the facts support the statement that Cabeza de Vaca went to Culiacan and there found Melchor Diaz acting as *alcalde mayor* and captain of the province, all said on this subject is submitted to the impartial judgment of the reader, with the suggestion that the main hypothesis in the statement is that of Diaz's then occupying such positions, and if this is sufficiently shown to be untrue, then the statement falls to the ground, and the wanderers did not go there.

While the statements quoted from Castañeda and Jaramillo amount to two isolated and discordant assertions as to Cabeza de Vaca's having gone so far north, what is said in refutation of the idea, is but to strengthen the position that the route adopted in this paper is, in the main, the only one deducible from all said in *Naufragios*, without further reflection as to the acts or motives which influenced the latter part of Cabeza de Vaca's relation.